

# AP Psychology Reading List

Listed below are a number of books related to psychology. You do not have to read any specific book, nor do you have to continue with a book that you find offensive. However, you will be asked throughout the year to pick a book off this list to read, in order to further your understanding of psychological principles and disorders. Each title also has a synopsis to help you choose.

## **The Minds of Billy Milligan** – Daniel Keyes

Out of control of his own actions, Billy Milligan was a man tormented by twenty-four distinct personalities battling for supremacy over his own body – a battle that culminated when he awoke in jail, arrested for the kidnap and rape of three women. In a landmark trial, Billy was acquitted of his crimes by reason of insanity caused by multiple personality – the first such court decision in history.

## **Sybil** – Flora Rheta Schreiber

A survivor of terrifying childhood abuse, victim of sudden and mystifying blackouts, and the first case of multiple personality ever to be psychoanalyzed. Sybil – and her 16 selves. You'll experience the strangeness and fascination of one woman's rare affliction – and travel with her on her long, ultimately triumphant journey back to wholeness.

## **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest** – Ken Kesey

In the early 1960s, Ken Kesey supported himself by working a psychiatric hospital. This is the unforgettable story of a mental ward and its inhabitants. Hailed upon its publication as "a glittering parable of good and evil" (The New York Times Book Review) and "a roar of protest against middlebrow society's Rules and the invisible Rulers who enforce them" (Time), this powerful book is as bracing and insightful today as it was in the 1960s.

## **Man's Search for Meaning** – Victor Frankl

Considered to be one of the most important contributions to psychiatry since the writing of Freud. In it, Dr. Frankl gives a moving account of his life amid the horrors of the Nazi death camps, chronicling the harrowing experience that led to his discovery of his theory of logotherapy. A profound revelation born out of Dr. Frankl's years as a prisoner in Auschwitz and other concentration camps, logotherapy is a modern and positive approach to the mentally or spiritually disturbed personality. Stressing man's freedom to transcend suffering and find a meaning to his life regardless of his circumstance.

## **Girl, Interrupted** – Susanna Kaysen

In 1967, after a session with a psychiatrist she'd never seen before, eighteen-year-old Susanna Kaysen was put in a taxi and sent to McLean Hospital. She spent most of the next two years on the ward for teenage girls in a psychiatric hospital as renowned for its famous clientele and

progressive methods of treating those who could afford its sanctuary.

### **The Plague** – Albert Camus

A haunting tale of human resilience in the face of unrelieved horror, Camus' novel about a bubonic plague ravaging the people of a North African coastal town is a classic of twentieth-century literature.

### **On Death and Dying** – Elisabeth Kubler Ross

One of the most famous psychological studies of the late twentieth century, *On Death and Dying* grew out of an interdisciplinary seminar on death, originated and conducted by Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. She explores the now-famous idea of the five stages of dealing with death: denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

### **Death Be Not Proud** – John J. Gunther

Johnny Gunther was only seventeen years old when he died of a brain tumor. During the months of his illness, everyone near him was unforgettably impressed by his level-headed courage, his wit and quiet friendliness, and, above all, his unfaltering patience through times of despair. This deeply moving book is a father's memoir of a brave, intelligent, and spirited boy.

### **I Never Promised You a Rose Garden** – Joanne Greenberg

Deborah must undertake a three-year struggle to resist the allure of madness, and rejoin the real world. Poignant and compelling, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden* is a "convincing and emotionally gripping" read that introduces an unforgettable young heroine and stands as a modern classic on the topic of mental illness.

### **Prozac Nation** – Elizabeth Wurtzel

A harrowing story of breakdowns, suicide attempts, drug therapy, and an eventual journey back to living, this poignant & often hilarious book gives voice to the high incidence of depression among America's youth. Here is the intensely personal story of a young girl full of promise, whose mood swings have risen & fallen like the lines of a sad ballad.

### **Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness**

—Pete Earley had no idea. His son, Mike, was declared mentally ill, and Earley was thrown headlong into the maze of contradictions, disparities, and catch-22s that is America's mental health system. The more Earley dug, the more he uncovered the bigger picture: Our nation's prisons have become our new mental hospitals. *Crazy* tells two stories. The first is his son's. The second his investigation inside Miami-Dade County Jail.

### **An Unquiet Mind** – Kay Redfield Jamison

A remarkable personal testimony: the revelation of her own struggle since adolescence with manic-depression, and how it has shaped her life. Vividly, directly, with candor, wit, and simplicity, she takes us into the fascinating and dangerous territory of this form of madness.

### **Civilization and Its Discontents** – Sigmund Freud

Maybe Sigmund Freud's best-known work. Originally published in 1930, it seeks to answer ultimate questions: What influences led to the creation of civilization? How did it come to be? What determines its course? In this seminal volume of twentieth-century

thought, Freud elucidates the contest between aggression, indeed the death drive, and its adversary eros. He speaks to issues of human creativity and fulfillment, the place of beauty in culture, and the effects of repression.

### **Animals in Translation** – Temple Grandin

Temple's professional training as an animal scientist and her history as a person with autism have given her a perspective like that of no other expert in the field. Standing at the intersection of autism and animals, she offers unparalleled observations and groundbreaking ideas about both.

### **Body Outlaws** – Ophira Edut

Pick up a magazine, turn on the TV, and you'll find few women who haven't been fried, dyed, plucked, or tucked. In short, you'll see no body outlaws. The writers in this groundbreaking anthology reveal a world where bodies come in all their many-splendored shapes, sizes, colors, and textures. In doing so, they expand the national dialogue on body image to include race, ethnicity, sexuality, and power-issues that, while often overlooked, are intimately linked to how women feel about their bodies.

### **The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat** – Oliver Sacks

Sacks recounts the case histories of patients lost in the bizarre, apparently inescapable world of neurological disorders. The stories are of individuals afflicted with fantastic perceptual and intellectual aberrations: patients who have lost their memories and with them the greater part of their pasts; who are no longer able to recognize people and common objects; who are stricken with violent tics and grimaces or who shout involuntary obscenities; whose limbs have become alien; who have been dismissed as retarded yet are gifted with uncanny artistic or mathematical talents.

### **Awakenings** Oliver Sacks

The remarkable story of a group of patients who contracted sleeping-sickness during the great epidemic just after World War I. Frozen for decades in a trance-like state, these men and women were given up as hopeless until 1969, when Dr. Oliver Sacks gave them the then-new drug L-DOPA, which had an astonishing, explosive, "awakening" effect.

### **Dry** – Augusten Burroughs

Burroughs presents himself in his early 20s, earning six figures a year as a New York City ad copywriter and drinking so much alcohol that it wafts from his pores. Landing in rehab, Burroughs initially resists 12-step bromides. Upon release, however, he recognizes the strength they give him as he confronts the death of a former lover, an affair with a fellow recovering addict, and his own struggles with the temptation to have just one drink.

### **Running With Scissors** – Augusten Burroughs

The true story of *Running with Scissors* is the true story of a boy whose mother (a poet with delusions of Anne Sexton) gave him away to be raised by her unorthodox psychiatrist who bore a striking resemblance to Santa Claus. The story of an outlaw childhood where rules were unheard of, and the Christmas tree stayed up all year round, where Valium was consumed like candy, and



if things got dull an electroshock-therapy machine could provide entertainment. The funny, harrowing and bestselling account of an ordinary boy's survival under the most extraordinary circumstances.

### **Walden Two** – B.F. Skinner

This fictional outline of a modern utopia has been a center of controversy ever since its publication in 1948. Set in the United States, it pictures a society in which human problems are solved by a scientific technology of human conduct.

### **Passing for Normal** – Amy S. Wilensky

I am crazy. But maybe I am not. For most of her life, this thought haunted Amy Wilensky as she watched her body do things she couldn't control, repeatedly twitching and contorting into awkward positions. Her mind lurched and veered in ways she didn't understand: she felt that she must touch wood at all times to ward off harm, that chewing a wad of stale gum would prevent a plane crash. Why couldn't she throw away meaningless scraps of paper? Why were six-word sentences strangely satisfying?

### **The Moral Animal** – Robert Wright

Are men literally born to cheat? Does monogamy actually serve women's interests? These are among the questions that have made *The Moral Animal* one of the most provocative science books in recent years. Wright unveils the genetic strategies behind everything from our sexual preferences to our office politics--as well as their implications for our moral codes and public policies.

### **Nobody, Nowhere** – Donna Williams

Labeled deaf, retarded, disturbed, and insane, Donna Williams lived in a world of her own. Alternating between rigid hostility and extroversion, she lived in a dreamlike state, withdrawn, viewing her incomprehensible surroundings from the security of a "world under glass," parroting the voices of those around her in the hope that they would leave her alone. Few people understood her, least of all Donna herself. She knew only that something was wrong with her, and she yearned to be "normal." It was not until three years ago, when Donna was twenty-five, that she discovered the word - autism - that would at last give her the opportunity to understand herself and to build a bridge to join the real world.

### **Too Scared to Cry** – Lenore Terr

Clinical professor of psychiatry Terr examines the many ways that trauma has changed not only the children she's treated, but all of us. She demonstrates that traumatized children can be helped, showing that there is hope for the innocent victims of our frightening world.

### **The Fisher King and the Handless Maiden** – Robert A. Johnson

It is very dangerous when a wound is so common in a culture that hardly anyone knows there is a problem. Such is the case right now with our wounded feeling function—our inability to find joy, worth, and meaning in life. Johnson revisits two medieval tales and illuminates how this feeling function has become a casualty of our modern times.

**Bloodletting** – Victoria Leatham

A darkly compelling story, this memoir examines one woman's secret overwhelming desire to physically hurt herself. Any casual observer of Victoria's life would not have seen that this confident, pretty, and articulate young woman was intensely struggling with the all-encompassing need to injure her body. This powerful account chronicles her stresses and insecurities, as well as the mental anguish that led to her wanting to physically turn on herself. Frequently an unspoken and unacknowledged disease, this psychological ailment affects an often hidden population; Victoria's story explores both the disease and the forces that drive it.

**The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing** – Judith L. Rappaport

Up to six million Americans are afflicted with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), a serious, emotionally crippling disease. Cleaning, counting, washing, checking, avoiding--these are just some of the rituals that sufferers are powerless to stop. Now an expert on OCD reveals breakthroughs in diagnosis, successful new behaviorist therapies, drug treatments, and more.

**Whispers: The Voices of Paranoia** – Ronald Siegel

With vivid tales that are usually the realm of the novelist, Siegel lets his readers experience the suspicion, terror, and rage that possess the mind of the paranoid. This is the first book to investigate the actual experience of paranoia and to demonstrate that under the right conditions - drugs or deprivation, for example - anyone can be driven into that state. And indeed, eight million Americans already have been.

**Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl** – Marguerite Sechehaye

Schizophrenia from a first person perspective, although no book can accurately convey the true FEELING of the disease, helps to give an idea of the immensity of what's affected. This book is deeply moving, the isolation this person went through is heartbreaking. It helps to shed light on what the disorder is: It is a radical change in perception of self and environment, the 'symptoms' are simply that person trying to deal with this alteration. And in trying to deal, they give themselves away in the extreme difficulty of maintaining control.

**When Rabbit Howls** – Trudi Chase

To escape the horror of violent abuse, the two-year-old child "went to sleep" and created the inner world of "the Troops," the 92 voices that shielded her from pain, but that she didn't know existed until adulthood. This is a journey through the fragmented world of the multiple personality--told by the Troop.

**Just Checking** – Emily Colas

We all worry. We all have moments of unfounded dread (Is someone behind that door?), or little phobias (roaches) or superstitions (step on a crack) that we indulge. *Just Checking* is an autobiographical account of what it is like to live with a full-blown case of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), which, at its height, finds author Emily Colas nervous that she will contract a disease from blood that she sees on television.

### **The Life Cycle Completed** – Eric Erickson

For decades Erik H. Erikson's concept of the stages of human development has deeply influenced the field of contemporary psychology. Here, with new material by Joan M. Erikson, is an expanded edition of his final work. *The Life Cycle Completed* eloquently closes the circle of Erikson's theories, outlining the unique rewards and challenges - for both individuals and society - of very old age.

### **Cracked** – Dr. Drew Pinsky

Best known as cohost of the long-running advice program *Loveline*. But he is also the medical director of an addiction rehab clinic in Southern California, treating the severest cases of drug dependency and psychiatric breakdown. Now, in this emotionally arresting narrative, Pinsky takes readers into the hospital with him, sharing the stories behind his struggle to help the patients he calls "the disconnected" regain control of their lives.

### **Perfect** – Natasha Friend

Isabelle Lee has a problem, and it's not just Ape Face, her sister, or group therapy for an eating disorder, or even that her father died and her mother is depressed and in denial. It's that Ashley, the most popular girl in school, is inviting Isabelle to join her at lunch and at sleepovers at her house, and this is presenting Isabelle with a dilemma. Pretty Ashley has moved Isabelle up the social ladder, but is it worth keeping the secret they share? Caught in the orbit of popularity and appearances, Isabelle must navigate a world with mixed messages, false hopes, and potentially harmful turns, while coping with her own flailing family and emotions. The author brings a depth of characterization, humor, and a real adolescent's voice to this multileveled story about the desire to be perfect in an imperfect world.

### **Drama of the Gifted Child** – Alice Miller

Why are many of the most successful people plagued by feelings of emptiness and alienation? Far too many of us had to learn as children to hide our own feelings, needs, and memories skillfully in order to meet our parents' expectations and win their "love." Alice Miller writes, "When I used the word 'gifted' in the title, I had in mind neither children who receive high grades in school nor children talented in a special way. I simply meant all of us who have survived an abusive childhood thanks to an ability to adapt even to unspeakable cruelty by becoming numb.

### **People of the Lie** – M. Scott Peck

Dr. Peck probes the essence of human evil. People who are evil attack others instead of facing their own failures. Peck demonstrates the havoc these *People of the Lie* work in the lives of those around them. He presents, from cases encountered in his psychiatric practice, unforgettably vivid incidents of evil in everyday life. This disturbing, fascinating book offers a strikingly original approach to the age-old problem of human evil.

### **Overcoming Anxiety** – Reneau Peuifoy

*Overcoming Anxiety* presents a unique approach to managing anxiety, offering readers a



comprehensive and far-reaching philosophy that stresses lasting preventive measures over superficial - and often just temporary - antidotes. This groundbreaking book shows sufferers how to shift their focus from the messenger, or the symptoms, of anxiety, to the message - the core cause of anxiety.

### **Party of One** – Anneli Rufus

Self-reliant, each loner swims alone through a social world -- a world of teams, troops and groups -- that scorns and misunderstands those who stand apart. Everywhere from newspapers to playgrounds, loners are accused of being crazy, cold, stuck-up, standoffish, selfish, sad, bad, secretive and lonely -- and, of course, serial killers. Loners, however, know better than anyone how to entertain themselves -- and how to contemplate and to create. They have a knack for imagination, concentration, inner discipline, and invention -- a talent for not being bored.

### **6 Pillars of Self-Esteem** – Nathaniel Branden

Of all the judgments we pass in life, none is as important as the judgment we pass on ourselves. Nearly every psychological problem - from anxiety and depression to self-sabotage at work or at school, from fear of intimacy to chronic hostility - is traceable to low self-esteem. In the chaotic and competitive world we face today, both personal happiness and economic survival rest on how well we understand self-esteem and nurture it in ourselves and in others.

### **Stick Figure** – Lori Gottlieb

For a girl growing up in Beverly Hills in 1978, the motto "You can never be too rich or too thin" is writ large. Precocious Lori learns her lessons well, so when she's told that "real women don't eat dessert" and "no one could ever like a girl who has thunder thighs," she decides to become a paragon of dieting. Soon Lori has become the "stick figure" she's longed to resemble. But then what? Stick Figure takes the reader on a gripping journey, as Lori struggles to reclaim both her body and her spirit.

### **Wasted** – Marya Hornbacher

Based on research and her own battle with anorexia and bulimia, which left her with permanent physical ailments and nearly killed her, Hornbacher's book explores the mysterious and ruthless realm of self-starvation, which has its grip firmly around the minds and bodies of adolescents all across this country. Hornbacher became bulimic at the age of 9, anorexic at 15, and went back and forth between the two until she was 20. In 1993, when she weighed 52 pounds, doctors predicted she had a week to live. Hornbacher's story is of a journey to self-destruction and back again, raw enough to make even the most jaded readers flinch and honest enough to make the most cynical pause thoughtful.

### **The Suicidal Mind** – Edwin S. Shneidman

Brimming with insight into the suicidal impulse and with helpful suggestions for counteraction methods. Shneidman presents the psychological dramas that play themselves out in the suicidal mind through the exploration of three moving case studies.

## **From Binge to Blackout: A Mother and Son Struggle with Teen**

### **Drinking** – Chris and Toren Volkmann

Throughout his college years, Toren Volkmann partied like there was no tomorrow, having what was supposed to be the time of his life. Like so many parents, his mother, Chris, overlooked Toren's growing alcohol problem. But when he graduated, Toren realized that he had become a full-blown alcoholic. And he was not alone.